



Issued March 19, 2021

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

SOCIAL CHANGE MARKETING CAMPAIGN SERVICES, RE: STORMWATER

DEADLINE: 4 p.m., EDT, Friday, April 9, 2021

See background materials posted at: <http://www.ccrpcvt.org/resources/rfprfqgrants/>

The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (**CCRPC**), in partnership with its MS4 Subcommittee is soliciting responses from qualified Contractors and/or Organizations (hereinafter **CONSULTANT**) to aid in implementation of a social change marketing campaign known as Rethink Runoff. The purpose of this campaign is to educate residents about water quality, and particularly the impacts of stormwater runoff in a nine-town portion of Chittenden County, Vermont.

The program will engage citizens and businesses in nine municipalities and three entities in Chittenden County who are subject to the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) permit under Phase 2 of the Federal Clean Water Act. Milton, Colchester, Winooski, Burlington, Essex Junction, Essex, Williston, South Burlington and Shelburne are the nine municipal MS4 permittees. The three “non-traditional” MS4s are the University of Vermont, the Vermont Agency of Transportation and the Burlington International Airport. Stormwater-impaired streams¹ in Chittenden County are located within most of the municipalities.

This permit includes Minimum Control Measure #1, Public Education & Outreach Efforts. Under this measure, permittees *“must implement a public education program to distribute educational materials to the community or conduct equivalent outreach activities about the impacts of stormwater discharges on water bodies. The program shall include the steps that the public can take to reduce pollutants in stormwater runoff including an explanation of the problem of stormwater volume and solutions for reducing the amount of runoff volume reaching waters of the state.”*

It is the intent of the twelve permittees identified above to continue to meet the requirements of Minimum Control Measure #1 via cooperative participation in and funding of Rethink Runoff (RR). The elements of the RR program will include, at a minimum: 1) operation of the Program’s website, www.rethinkrunoff.org, 2) advertisements in various media and 3) coordination of outreach efforts with the Public Involvement & Participation effort of Rethink Runoff known as the Rethink Runoff Stream Team.

¹ As identified on the State’s 303(d) these impaired streams are Allen Brook, Bartlett Brook, Centennial Brook, Englesby Brook, Indian Brook, Morehouse Brook, Munroe Brook, Potash Brook and Sunderland Brook.

BACKGROUND

The program is a continuation of efforts carried out since 2003. That program has:

1. Developed a brand identity with a logo;
2. Created a website, www.rethinkrunoff.org to serve as a clearinghouse of information for residents and businesses.
3. Developed and placed seasonal advertising in local media (newspapers, cable & broadcast TV, radio, Front Porch Forum, Facebook, Google) to drive people to www.rethinkrunoff.org
4. Implemented multiple surveys, the first in 2003 and repeated in 2007, the second in 2008 and 2013 and a third updated survey in 2018 in order to gauge changes in opinions, attitudes, knowledge and behavior of residents in the targeted communities regarding stormwater. A replication of the 2018 survey is planned for 2023.
5. Received a 2006 Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence, a 2011 Stormwater Award from the Green Mountain Water Environment Association and a 2014 *Best Stormwater Idea in New England "Stormy Award"* from the New England Stormwater Collaborative.

Note: Potential bidders are encouraged to learn more about Rethink Runoff and this potential contract by visiting the program website at www.rethinkrunoff.org and most importantly by reviewing meeting minutes and materials of the CCRPC's MS4 Subcommittee available at <https://www.ccrpcvt.org/about-us/committees/clean-water-advisory-committee/>

SCOPE OF WORK AND BUDGET

Over the 5-year period, anticipated to run from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2026, the annual budget for the Marketing Contractual Services sought via this RFP will vary from year to year depending upon workload. Exclusive of media purchase costs and subconsultant costs (e.g. voice-over, video production costs, etc.), CCRPC anticipates providing to the CONSULTANT \$7,000 to \$15,000 per year for professional services. Please note this is only an estimate to provide a general guideline to potential CONSULTANTS of the value of the contract and not a guarantee of annual cash flow, cash retainers, mandated charges, etc. Though subject to change, the RR program anticipates the following CONSULTANT tasks over the next five years.

Year One: July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

Task A. Media Campaign: early fall 2021 (early September – early October)

- Use the existing inventory of RR advertisements to manage placement in media outlets on a similar schedule to that used in prior years.
- Manage digital ads to optimize cost-per-click at a similar expense level achieved in prior years.

- Dollar allocation available for this early fall 2021 effort shall be approximately \$8,000 billed to and paid directly by CCRPC.

Task B. Media Campaign: Winter 2022 (January - February)

- Use the existing inventory of RR advertisements plus limited new creative by the CONSULTANT to manage placement in media outlets on a similar schedule to that used in prior years.
- Manage digital ads to optimize cost-per-click at a similar expense level achieved in prior years.
- Dollar allocation available for this January-February effort shall be approximately \$2,000 billed to and paid directly by CCRPC.

Task C. Media Campaign: Spring 2022 (mid-April through – June)

- Use the existing inventory of RR advertisements as well as new creative by the CONSULTANT.
- Manage digital ads to optimize cost-per-click at a similar expense level achieved in prior years.
- Dollar allocation available for this early fall 2021 effort shall be approximately \$16,000 (billed to and paid directly by CCRPC).

Note: The RR Program has traditionally pushed its advertising in the three time periods noted above. However, the use of iterative digital advertising implementation has often enabled ad buys to stretch longer than the planned time period and the MS4 Subcommittee will want to continue to do so if funding allows and external conditions warrant, for example good weather drawing residents to gardening or outdoor recreation.

Note: The current firm providing the services is under contract through June 30, 2021. Advertisements for the April-May-June timeframe are currently being designed/finalized right now in March 2021 and will be scheduled & secured by the current consultant. Any digital advertising that carries over beyond July 1st from that ad dollar allocation will be managed by the current firm via a separate contract.

Task D. Program maintenance:

The CONSULTANT shall:

1. By March 1, 2022 provide a Minimum Control Measure #1 Annual Report for Calendar Year 2021 compliance reporting purposes in PDF format similar to those available at (<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/resources/rfprfggrants/>) that highlights media purchases, earned media and web traffic and other data;
2. Participate at least four times during this fiscal year for one to two hours at MS4 Steering Committee meetings in Winooski and/or virtually; and
3. Web maintenance of www.rethinkrunoff.org (CMS is WordPress) as needed to assure functionality, add pages, etc. Any new text content would largely be provided by staff of municipal MS4s.
4. Provide ad hoc design services on behalf of the Rethink Runoff Stream Team effort.

Year Two (starting July 2022) through Year Five (ending June 2026): annually July 1 – June 30
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On an annual basis for these four fiscal years, the CONSULTANT shall implement the following:

1. Prepare a Media Schedule and secure media purchases for three, time blocks per fiscal year similar to those detailed above in Task A, B and C and at a similar dollar allocation of \$8,000, \$2,000 and \$16,000 respectively. Note that invoices for media will be paid directly by CCRPC.
2. Annually, by March 1st of 2023, 2024, 2025 and 2026 provide a Minimum Control Measure #1 Annual Report for the prior Calendar Year to aid in compliance reporting purposes in PDF format similar to those available at (<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/resources/rfprfggrants/>) that highlights media purchases, earned media and web traffic and other data;
3. Participate at least four times a year for one to two hours at MS4 Steering Committee meetings either in Winooski or virtually, and
4. Web maintenance as needed to assure functionality, add pages, etc. Content updates and editing will be performed by members of the MS4 Subcommittee and the CCRPC.
5. Provide ad hoc design services on behalf of the Rethink Runoff Stream Team effort.

Additionally, in one or more of these four years, only as directed by the MS4 Subcommittee, and subject to clearly identified deliverables and agreed-upon cost, the CONSULTANT shall

engage in the development of new creative (advertising, website, promotional items, etc.) to support the program.

APPLICATION PROCESS AND CONTRACTING

The contract awarded for this Program will be for five years from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2026. The performance of the CONSULTANT will be assessed on an annual basis and the CCRPC and the CONSULTANT will both possess the right to terminate the contract with 60 days' notice. CCRPC shall only be liable for reimbursement of CONSULTANT expenses authorized by CCRPC prior to any notice of termination being sent or for payment of project-related expenses such as advertising previously authorized by CCRPC.

All proposals become the property of the CCRPC upon submission. The cost of preparing, submitting and presenting is the sole expense of the firm. The CCRPC reserves the right to reject any and all statement of qualifications received as a result of this solicitation, to waive any formality and any technicalities or to cancel this RFP in part or in its entirety if it is in the best interests of the CCRPC. This request for proposals in no way obligates the CCRPC to award a contract or contracts.

Submission Requirements In order to be considered responsive to this RFP, each prospective bidder must complete and submit the responses and materials requested in Attachment A, no later than 4 p.m., EDT, Friday, April 9, 2021 by email, U.S. mail, delivery service or in person to

RFP RESPONSE: **RETHINK RUNOFFPROGRAM**
ATTENTION: Dan Albrecht
Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission
110 West Canal St., Suite 202, Winooski, VT 05404

Delivery as PDF files via e-mail to dalbrecht@ccrpcvt.org is preferred.

Please type "Rethink Runoff RFP response" in the subject line.

- Submission of questions related to the proposal are acceptable. Questions may be submitted by email to dalbrecht@ccrpcvt.org up until March 26, 2021. Answers to questions will be posted no later than noon on March 31, 2021 at <http://www.ccrpcvt.org/resources/rfprfggrants/>
- Proposals received after the deadline will not be accepted. No phone calls or email to check on the proposal review process, please.
- All information received in response to this Request that is marked Proprietary will be handled accordingly. Responses to the Request will not be returned.
- CCRPC's Customary Agreement Provisions apply and are posted at:
 - <http://www.ccrpcvt.org/resources/rfprfggrants/>

Selection

The CCRPC will work with a Selection Committee comprised of participating MS4s to review and evaluate each proposal. Bidders may be asked to give a presentation to the Selection Committee and/or the full MS4 Subcommittee of the CCRPC Clean Water Advisory Committee. After consultation with various representatives of MS4s, the CCRPC shall enter into contract negotiations with the highest-ranked proposer based on qualifications, price, and the ability of the entity to provide services that meet the relevant MS4 permit requirement. If the CCRPC and the highest-ranked CONSULTANT are unable to agree on final terms, the CCRPC shall then meet with the second-ranking CONSULTANT to see if a suitable contract can be agreed upon.

Contracts shall include, but not be limited to, language specifying the right of the CCRPC to cancel a contract if services are not being adequately provided and language specifying that payments to CONSULTANTS shall be made only for services rendered.

It is the intent of the CCRPC to have the CONSULTANT start by July 1, 2021. No start-up funds will be provided to the CONSULTANT. CONSULTANT will be reimbursed for project related expenses and staff costs within 30 business days of receipt by CCRPC of a detailed monthly invoice.

The contract shall comply with the Fair Employment Practices and Americans with Disabilities Act. The CCRPC agrees to comply with the requirement of Title 21 V.S.A Chapter 5, Subchapter 6, relating to fair employment practices, to the full extent applicable. The CCRPC and the CONSULTANT shall also ensure, to the full extent required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 that qualified individuals with disabilities receive equitable access to the services, programs, and activities provided via this contract.

The CCRPC recognizes the important contribution and vital impact which small businesses have on the state's economy. All businesses have equal access and opportunity to compete for this contract. **The CCRPC encourages businesses owned by minorities and women to compete for this contract.**

Contract Requirements

The CONSULTANT awarded this contract(s) must be registered with the Vermont Secretary of State's office to do business in the State of Vermont. The successful CONSULTANT will be expected to execute sub-agreements for each subconsultant named in the proposal upon award of this contract.

Prior to beginning any work, the CONSULTANT shall obtain Insurance Coverage in accordance with the CCRPC's Customary Agreement Provisions and take any other necessary actions to comply with these provisions. [See separate 6-page document at <http://www.ccrpcvt.org/resources/rfprfggrants/>.

ATTACHMENT A:
SOCIAL CHANGE MARKETING CAMPAIGN, RE: STORMWATER
Required information
(use 11 or 12 point font in response; 8.5" x 11" pages)

Question 1 **Please include the following information**

- a. Cover letter (limit letter to one page)
- b. Relevant staff and biographies (one page per employee)
- c. A spreadsheet (limit to one page) showing hourly charge out rates for staff on the project
- d. A spreadsheet (limit to one page) showing person-hours and costs per task category estimated to be expended in Year One.
- e. A spreadsheet (limit one page) showing person-hours and costs per task category to be expended for a representative single year within Years Two through Five for tasks 1-5 (do not include an estimate for new creative).
- f. Examples of other social marketing campaigns you have developed and/or implemented especially regarding any environmental or natural resource issues (please limit the total number of examples provided to three (3) and provide no more than one page per example). Please include weblinks if appropriate.

Question 2 **(please limit response to one page)**

Please provide your thoughts (both positive and critical) on the elements of our recent campaign: radio, print & TV ads, and other items of our toolbox; our website and its elements; etc. [Note: Examples from our campaign will be provided at <http://www.ccrpcvt.org/resources/rfprfggrants/>]. Please focus your comments on our past campaign. Your ideas for future efforts should be covered in your response to question 3.

Question 3 **(limit response to two pages)**

Given the Program that we have built over these years and what our survey results show, please provide your thoughts on the approach you would take if selected as the contractor for this project. Please be sure to address the following issues in your response:

- the relative effectiveness of various advertising media in social marketing;
- how would you recommend we use traditional media (TV, radio, print);
- how would you recommend we use traditional online media (web, Facebook, Front Porch Forum, pop-up ads;
- how would you recommend we use emerging and evolving social media (Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, other??
- how would you recommend we use other media (contests, giveaways /swag, outdoor advertising, indoor advertising, events, etc.); and
- do you have any thoughts on ways to leverage our advertising budget through partnerships or any other means?

Question 4 **(please limit response to one page)**

Please provide your thoughts (both positive and critical) on our website, www.rethinkrunoff.org the primary purpose of which is to encourage residents to take action to reduce the impacts of stormwater runoff.

- What elements do you think are effective to achieve that purpose?
- What elements are ineffective in that role?
- What elements/ideas could be added to achieve that purpose?